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NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

ELISABETH ROBINSON SCOVIL

TREATMENT OF HEAD COLDS.—A writer in the *American Journal of Medical Sciences* says a head cold is always infectious. He advises the restriction of the diet as the best remedy, large quantities of protein increasing the congestion. Early and frequent purgation is helpful. A hot mustard foot bath gives relief if used the first and second days of the cold. Draughts, wet feet and crowded places should be avoided. Tobacco is interdicted for a few days and alcohol absolutely forbidden. Internal medication is not used, local applications being preferred, as a mild alkaline spray followed by an oil spray.

BREAST TUMORS.—It is stated in the *Annals of Surgery* that in the early period in the development of every cancer of the breast it is absolutely curable. Early operation is therefore advised.

RESPIRATORY SUCTION IN SURGICAL SHOCK.—In an article in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* it is stated that in cases of surgical shock, increasing the carbon dioxid in the air the patient is breathing produces deep and rapid respirations, and the blood is pumped from the veins into the heart. A rubber bathing cap, inflated with a Davidson syringe, may be placed over the patient's nose and mouth that the air be re-breathed. When oxygen is necessary the cap may be removed and in a moment or two replaced. These experiments were carried out on animals, no observations having been as yet made on men.

EFFECTS OF MOVING PICTURES ON CHILDREN'S EYES.—A doctor writing in the *Glasgow Medical Journal* objects to the frequent attendance of young children at the movies. He would limit it to once a month for children from four to eight years old. The nervous strain of watching exciting pictures is apt to cause squinting.

USE OF MILK IN TYPHOID.—*The Medical Record* says typhoid patients will often tolerate milk for a time only to rebel suddenly against it, all the symptoms being aggravated. The patient is then placed on a water diet for one or two days, the only nutriment being sugar, rice flour and vegetable broths. At the end of this time the patient is fed every four hours, receiving cream of barley soup, panada, semolina, potato purée, or a little rice. Two quarts of liquid, lemonade, sweetened water, weak tea, weak coffee, etc., are given daily. Cereal soups may be strengthened by adding powdered cocoa. When the temperature is nearly normal milk may be resumed in a modified form.

STAMMERING.—A correspondent in the *Medical Record* writing on this subject, says stammering is caused by fear that the words cannot be pronounced fluently. He advises that children should not be allowed to stammer on school property. They should be required to write their recitations and not allowed to speak unless they can do so without hesitating. This would prevent other children being influenced by the bad example, and the child himself, being relieved from fear, would improve. The same attitude should be observed in the home.

PUNCTURE WOUNDS OF FOOT.—A paper in the *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* says that nail puncture wounds of the foot are not dangerous when caused by clean nails, and seldom cause infection if promptly treated. It does not produce tetanus except possibly in very rare instances. The wound is best treated by injecting pure tincture of iodine.

OCCUPATION THERAPY.—*The Journal of the American Medical Association* mentions that the *Maryland Psychiatric Quarterly* contains a sketch of the work of Susan E. Tracy, R.N., who has emphasized the value of occupation for convalescents in aiding recovery. She has established occupational teaching among the convalescents and the nurses of the Michael Reese Hospital, Chicago, where it has now become a definite part of the hospital routine and of the nurses' training course. This is peculiarly nurses' work.

WAR BREAD.—In an editorial on this subject in the *Medical Record* it is stated that the bread allowed to be made in Germany and Great Britain is made from grain from which the outer husks have been partially, or not at all, removed. The bread resulting is more nutritive than that made from fine white flour. The husks contain the vitamins, now known to be essential to good health.

BUTTERMILK IN INFANT FEEDING.—An article in a French medical journal recommends buttermilk as a food in the ordinary diarrhea of bottle-fed babies, saying nothing is as good. After the age of three or four, malted soups are better, made first with water alone, then with increasing amounts of milk.

RADIUM IN TREATMENT OF CANCER.—In an interesting paper in the *Medical Record*, Dr. Robert Abbe says, "we recognize in cancer only the riotous overgrowth of such cells as are normal in the body. They have lost their equilibrium in growing, lost some restraining control, taken up the joy of living and enormously multiplied at the expense of their host." Radium acts by its enormous and perpetual output of electrical units, shooting out through space infinitely small atoms each carrying a charge of electricity, some positive, some negative, if indeed

they are not electricity itself. After enumerating many cases of cancer, some of them inoperable, cured or relieved by radium, he says the efficiency of the subtle power of radium is a surprise only to those who have not studied it in a thousand experiments. Our knowledge of its value is still very incomplete.

GERMANY AND HOSPITAL SHIPS.—The *Medical Record* says a semi-official announcement from Berlin states the intention of the German government to prevent all passage of hospital ships in the barred zone and in the Mediterranean and to regard hospital ships appearing therein as war vessels and attack them immediately.

WOUND INFECTION.—A writer in *Annals of Surgery* reports good results in treating desperate cases of infected railway wounds by irrigation every four hours with hot peroxid solution (2 ounces to the liter) followed instantly by hot phenol solution ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce to the liter) and the application of hot perchlorid of mercury fomentations, wrung dry. The method of drainage is described and absolute rest on a splint advised.

CARBON MONOXID POISONING.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* in an abstract from *Presse Médicale* says the traditional idea that a red corpuscle once choked with carbon monoxid is dead, is no longer tenable. All it needs is oxygen to displace the carbon monoxid in it. When a person suffering from this poisoning is made to breathe pure oxygen as soon as possible, actual resurrection may ensue. In animals deeply intoxicated nearly the whole had disappeared from the blood at the end of an hour of oxygen breathing.

TREATMENT OF HEMORRHOIDS.—A Buenos Aires medical journal recommends an injection into the hemorrhoids of a 20 per cent solution of phenol in equal parts of glycerine and distilled water. From two to six drops is the capacity of each hemorrhoid. The phenol acts as an anesthetic, so no other is required. It cauterizes and obliterates the tumor. Much inflammation contra-indicates this treatment on account of the pain. The patient can return to business in a few hours.

SYMPTOMS OF ADENOIDS.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association* quoting from a Dutch medical journal, states that in a large number of cases of adenoids it had been observed that gritting the teeth occurred in from 25 to 40 per cent of the cases. In over 60 per cent there was snoring; enuresis in 29 per cent; aprosexia, or an inability to fix the attention, in over 34 per cent, and disturbances of hearing in more than 42 per cent.

PROHIBITION.—The General Medical Board of the Council of National Defense recommends that every military command should be surrounded by a protected zone in which the sale of alcoholic drinks should be prohibited.